

In Spite of Ourselves by ohappydagger

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Summary:

An AU where Billy moved to Hawkins at the beginning of season one and becomes fast friends with Steve, Tommy, and Carol. Boys fall in love, stuff happens, yada yada yada. (very slow updates)

In Spite of Ourselves

Steve huffed as he straightened the collar of his shirt, holding his backpack tightly in his other hand. Maybe a 3 minute makeout session in the bathroom wasn't much, but for a horny teenager, it was enough to leave him with blue balls. Thankfully, he had made plans to hang out with Nancy that night, knowing he'd barely pull through if he didn't get some sort of satisfaction. He nonchalantly held his bag in front of his crotch, trying to walk confidently out of the girls bathroom. He prayed that no one would see him as he exited, fully aware of how weird he must look.

"Harrington! What the fuck are you doing?"

Steve jumped, having been thoroughly startled; he could've sworn the hallway looked empty. He turned abruptly to face the source of the voice, one he could only barely recognize. He tried to flash a charming smile, really not feeling like holding a conversation with anyone, much less the new guy that every girl in school seemed to be fawning over. "Nothing," he said quickly, trying to think of the right way to explain. "Me and my girl were just *catching up* before class." He tried to emphasize the phrase 'catching up', wanting to make the comment as vaguely sexual as he could so Billy would focus on that instead of the fact he was hanging around in the ladies' room.

"Yeah? Because I wouldn't be surprised if you had a pussy, pretty boy," Billy remarked snarkily, quickly catching up to where Steve had stopped in the center of the hall. Steve hated Billy's smug smirk, or the look on his face, or how his face reminded him of himself but better- or maybe he just hated Billy's face in general. He had a stupid, perfectly structured, bitchy face.

The brunette started to walk away, but Billy followed close behind, the shorter boy's hands stuck in his pockets. Soon enough, they were walking together down the hall, side by side. To a passerby, they might have looked like good friends. Steve had no idea where Billy's next class may be, but he was nearly certain it wasn't in the same hall as his.

Laughing dryly, Steve eventually thought up a reply. "You sound like

a pansy calling me that, you know. ‘*Pretty boy.*’ Maybe you’re the one who should be hanging around the girls’ bathroom.”

Made apparent by the way Billy’s facial expression changed, the dirty blond didn’t take kindly to that statement. Despite the two of them making fast pals during the first few days of Billy going to Hawkins Highschool, they still had an odd sort of rivalry going on. They bonded over their taste in girls, certain bands, and being total douchebags, but there was a weird fight for dominance going on. It was easy to see.

“I’d watch your mouth if I were you, Harrington,” Billy replied, a forced smile on his face. Steve knew that comment was supposed to be mostly friendly, but something inside of him could only focus on how it may just as well be a warning.

Steve raised a brow, slowing his pace a bit as he neared his classroom. “I wouldn’t count on it,” he shot back. With that, he turned swiftly on his heel, walking into his class. Steve could feel Billy’s eyes burning into the back of his head, even after he had turned to knock on the door. He glanced back at his acquaintance who had stood behind him before turning away and coolly walking off.

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“You can’t invite Billy,” Steve snapped, grabbing Tommy’s shoulder. “It’s only going to be a *small* get together, dude. I can’t trust that asshole to not invite every airhead chick that latches onto him like a like a fucking parasite! You know that my parents would *kill me* if they come back to the house fucking trashed, if they found out I was having a bunch of fucking goons like you guys over and-”

He made himself quit rambling when he heard Carol practically cackling, her hand over her mouth. Steve shot her an ambiguous look, raising his brows. “My god! Your face is practically red as a tomato, you almost look sunburnt,” she said breathlessly, her fluffed

out locks bouncing as she threw her head back. Steve took a deep breath as he tried calming himself down, pulling his hand away from his friend.

Steve didn't think it should be a surprise that he was upset. If he tells his friends to specifically not invite anyone to something, then it should be obvious that he doesn't want anyone else there. Especially not someone who he hardly knew. If he was having some open party to bring people to, then they'd know.

"You really need to *calm down*, man," Tommy said, looking slightly more distraught than Carol did. He was the one getting chewed out, after all. "I'll make sure he comes alone, alright? I already told him to be there, anyways, if I just took it back then it'd be weird." Steve looked down at the ground, idly kicking a bit of gravel. They had been hanging out in the parking lot of their high school for maybe ten minutes now, waiting for Nancy to get out of class. The three of them had been talking about their next drinking binge when it was brought to Steve's attention that Billy Hargrove had been invited by his two buddies.

Tommy shrugged, rolled his eyes casually, then wrapped his arm around Carol's waist. "You're acting like such a bitch, making a big deal out of this."

"Yeah, Steve. They'll be demoting you to the queen if you keep this shit up," Carol giggled, leaning her head on Tommy's shoulder.

Steve crossed his arms across his chest, pouting. "Jesus, fine. If you guys want him there that bad then whatever, but if he fucks the night up, then I'll be pissed. Who fucking knows when my parents will leave us alone to do whatever we want again, I'm not having it ruined by some.. western freak," he said, ending the conversation. The trio knew well enough how often Steve's parents left him with the family credit card and a roll of fives to fend for himself, but no one commented on it. Carol brought up something new to talk about, and soon enough the subject had been changed.

Steve hardly contributed to the conversation, rarely commenting and allowing his friends to talk his ears off. He stared at the high school that was only a few yards away, waiting expectantly for Nancy to

come strutting out the doors.

Steve wasn't *really* over what they had talked about, though. He had wanted as few people there as possible, considering he only had so much alcohol, and even though he was known for being a partier and enjoying partaking in bad idea making, he didn't feel like being around a crowd. Nancy had already brought up to him earlier that her awkward friend Barb would probably show up with her, but now he had to deal with the annoying new kid, too.

When they had first met, Steve really had been open to the prospect of a friendship with Billy. Despite the guy's annoying over confidence (which just had to be him compensating for something, Steve knew) and flamboyance, Steve figured that they'd get along. Frankly, though, time was flying past, and he was already proving himself wrong.

Billy had to be the most annoying, condescending, perverted asshole Steve knew. Which Steve really shouldn't have batted an eye at, considering that the only types of people the jock did hang around were annoying, condescending, perverted assholes. Billy had just stuck himself into their group of friends so quickly and with such ease, it was like he didn't even have to try. All he did was be attractive and show a little skill on the court and *boom*, he was the most popular kid around (or, second most). Steve still held his place as the most well liked and well known guy in their high school, but Billy caught up with his popularity more and more each day).

Tommy and Carol loved him, which made Steve annoyed because Carol was obviously way too into Billy, and shouldn't that make Tommy jealous? But, being the idiot he was, Tommy only seemed to be enamored by Billy's infinite coolness. He had almost no flaws. Thinking about it made Steve cringe. A guy like that has no place in Hawkins.

Even though he tried not to, he found himself thinking about Billy often. Whether the tone of his thoughts were jealous, or annoyed, or even sometimes admiring, Steve found himself catching him in the act of day dreaming about the boy constantly. The only thing worse than having Billy plague his thoughts was having to hang around him all of the time. Billy being in their close group and attending every

hangout session they had was one thing, but it felt like Steve just ran into Billy everywhere. They always seemed to be the last two in the showers after gym, or Billy's car always ended up in the parking spot right next to his, or he'd be in line at the grocery store and right behind him, there Billy was. And of course, Hargrove was always just so calm and collected, smirking warmly at Steve and cracking a joke or starting conversation, completely unbothered. It was starting to creep him out as much as it agitated him.

Stop. Steve needed to get Billy out of his head. Finally, he had a distraction once Nancy came out of the high school. He waved eagerly at her, a genuine smile across his face. His next moves would be sweeping in, kissing her on the forehead and ruffling her hair, letting him be the perfect high school boyfriend, and indulging Nancy in her fantasy of being his perfect counterpart. Hargrove could wait.

To Steve's blatant disappointment, Billy had been the first to arrive at the Harrington home. About an hour before anyone was supposed to be there, Steve had caught a glimpse of the Chevrolet Camaro from his living room window. He had been sitting on the couch, watching a news story he really didn't care about, the blinds left slightly opened.

He sat up, squinting, before hopping off the couch and shuffling to the door. He peeked out the window, confirming that it was, in fact, Billy. Steve was a little stunned. He had assumed he was more of a "fashionably late" sorta person, not early.

Steve jumped away from the door, not wanting to be seen staring from the window, and scrambled to the kitchen. He fixed up his hair a bit in the mirror before grabbing a beer and opening it, suddenly jittery. The brunette tapped his nails against the counter, muttering a quiet profanity to himself. He didn't feel ready to have Billy over, not like there was anything he needed to do to prepare. It was probably just because he hadn't expected this.

He took his time getting back to the door when the doorbell had rung, not wanting it to look like he was too excited, waiting by the door or something. He slowly swung open the door, an unimpressed look on his face. He licked his lips, which were terribly soft and gentle from the ungodly amounts of chapstick he had applied every day since freshman year. “You know, everyone is coming at 7:00, not 6:00,” he deadpanned, looking Billy up and down.

“It’s 6:15, actually,” Billy replied. He held up a twelve pack of Coors, raising his eyebrows, a playful grin on his face. “And I thought you’d appreciate that I’m giving the two of us a head start.”

Steve was pleased by the gift, nodding slowly. He brought the beer up to his lips, the one he had just opened. He sipped it while he studied Billy’s dark shirt, only two or three of the buttons done. His chest was mostly exposed, smooth and toned. At one point the top must have been tucked in nicely to his jeans, but now most of the shirt was hanging freely.

“So did you only bring me here to eye fuck me or are you going to let me inside?” Billy spat, bringing Steve’s attention back up to his face. His jaw dropped in surprise momentarily, but he quickly closed his mouth and moved aside. “I’m not eye-fucking you, fucking skeez,” he shot back, not sure what else to say to save himself. Billy shook his head, and Steve watched as his grip on the cardboard box of beers tightened in what must have been frustration.

“Whatever. If you don’t want people to think you’re a fairy then don’t fucking act like it.” Steve detested how easily Billy found it to insult him, how naturally it seemed to come, and how each jab at him was somewhat accurate. He could’ve decked the blond right then, but he withheld himself from being violent. He was sure Nancy would just love to hear that he’d gotten into a fight with the new guy. Steve really had a hard time keeping his act together just to keep that girl mollified.

The brunette decided not to continue this fight, giving up with a defeated sigh. He led Billy to his kitchen, watching as the other boy opened up the box. Steve chugged the can he had already opened from his own pack of Schaefer, haphazardly tossing it into the trash when he was finished. Steve’s gaze was floating around his kitchen,

not like there was much to look at, or at least nothing he'd already seen. He could hear the sound of a beer can opening, and the house was quiet enough for him to hear Billy take a swig as well. The only background sound was the TV.

The awkwardness in the room was nearly palpable. They'd never had to be alone together for more than a couple of minutes, this was the first.

Steve felt the need to be at least a little chivalrous, considering that his attitude towards Billy for the last few weeks had been disdainful, if not a bit hostile. Billy was usually just as much of a dickhead as Steve tended to be, but still, he didn't want to be so unfriendly towards the guy that he completely lost his respect and trust. Especially if they continued to have mutual friends.

He reached up and opened up a cabinet above the stove, grabbing a bottle from inside. He showed the label to Billy, who lazily lulled his head to read it. "Jack Daniels?" he asked, raising his brows. "Didn't think you were the type to enjoy drinking anything that hard."

Steve frowned. "What the hell is that supposed to mean?"

Billy shrugged. "Chill out, princess. Just didn't think you'd like whiskey."

"Well," Steve muttered softly as he opened up the bottle, agitation lacing his tone, "I do, so.."

The blond leaned over the counter, his forearms pressed against it, head tilted to watch Steve. Harrington glanced over at him once, and the other boy's eyes seemed to be fixated on his hands. He looked away, and as soon as Steve's hands were off of the bottle, Billy grabbed a hold of it. He put it up to his lips and took a long sip, his eyes shutting momentarily. "Sure, you can have the first drink, don't even ask about it," Steve said, half-joking. This earned a smile from Billy.

"You're just going to drink it from the bottle?" He asked, a brow raised. Billy, confused, put it down.

“Yeah.. And?” He questioned.

“Well, I have shot glasses.”

“We don’t need shot glasses.”

There was an awkward pause, and they stood there silent for a moment. Eventually, Steve grabbed the bottle and drank from the neck. He swallowed, shaking his head when he felt the warm burn travel down his throat. “Yikes,” he muttered, mostly to himself. “Wouldn’t this be better with ice?” Steve asked, looking back at Billy, who was currently pacing around the large kitchen. The blond said nothing, his hands stuck in his pockets.

Steve chewed on the inside of this cheek. He was beginning to think that maybe being silent around Billy was somehow more insufferable than having to talk to him. “So, are you joining football this year?” he asked, abandoning the whiskey and grabbing a Coors instead.

Billy shook his head, seeming to snap back to the moment. He looked back at Steve, an indifferent look on his face. “Not into sports.”

This shocked Steve, and he chuckled in disbelief. “No way. You’re a fucking champ on the basketball court, you’ve at least got to be into basketball,” he insisted. A small grin grew on Billy’s face.

“Yeah, well, I wouldn’t join a team around here unless I was paid. You guys eat shit.”

Steve raised a brow. “Oh, so we’re not good enough for you?”

“Yeah. That exactly.”

The jock rolled his eyes, watching as Billy took another drink from the bottle. “So did you play anything in California, then?”

“Sure. I surfed, sometimes competitively.” “Surfing doesn’t fucking count as a sport-”

“The hell it does! Of course it does, it’s a fucking sport.”

Steve didn’t care enough to continue that argument. He leaned back

against the counter, sighing. A question popped into his head, and he felt no need to keep himself from voicing it. “So, why’d you move to Indiana, anyways? I mean, Hawkins is no L.A.” he asked, trailing off.

That seemed to strike a nerve, as Billy’s expression that had become disarming had begun to fade away into one of machismo disinterest again. “None of your fucking business, that’s why,” he replied, holding his ground.

“Oh, so now you’re going to pretend that you’re some mysterious hotshot, yeah, that’s a real crowd pleaser,” Steve snorted, unimpressed.

Billy gave him a stern look, his expression beginning to give away that he was getting upset. “I’m not fucking mysterious, it’s just not your fucking business. Drop it, dickhead,” he snapped protectively, muscles tensing. Steve put his hands up defensively.

“Chill out, princess,” the brunette mocked. Before Billy could retort, there was a knock at the door. Steve’s attention shifted away from his first guest, and he had already turned around and began to exit the kitchen, leaving Billy there to stand alone.